

sharps acoustics

**Mary Ward House / Tavis
House**

Review of noise assessment carried out for
Tavis House London.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Sharps Acoustics LLP (SAL) have been instructed by Mary Ward House to review a noise assessment report submitted in support of a planning application for the refurbishment and extension to Tavis House, London. The report was produced by Hoare Lea and dated 28th March 2024.
- 1.2 Tavis House and Mary Ward House are immediately adjacent to each other, meaning that noise and vibration associated with the demolition, construction and operation of the proposal has a potential to significantly impact on the use of Mary Ward House. This is exacerbated by the particular sensitivity of Mary Ward House due to its heritage status, which means that very little can be done at Mary Ward House to control noise from outside.
- 1.3 This note sets out our findings following this review.

2.0 Scope of noise assessment

- 2.1 There are two phases of work which need to be considered when assessing the potential noise and vibration impact from the proposed development. These are:
 - Noise and vibration during demolition and construction and
 - Noise during the operation of the proposal, including noise from plant, vehicle movements and deliveries or other servicing. There is also be the potential for disturbance from other uses such as people using the terrace.
- 2.2 The Hoare Lea report only considers noise from plant associated from the proposed development. The lack of assessment of noise and vibration during construction and demolition and of other sources of noise is an important omission, in SAL view.
- 2.3 The noise assessment describes:

"... the installation of heat pumps and strobic fans, the units will be located at roof level to enable a lab use. The most exposed noise sensitive receptors are the residential premises along Tavistock Place and Burton Street."
- 2.4 The listed receptors are shown in Figure 1 of the report.
- 2.5 Mary Ward House is not identified as a noise sensitive receptor. This is a key omission.
- 2.6 Mary Ward House is not a dwelling and, hence, an assessment using BS4142 (which is only intended to be used to assess noise from dwellings) would not be appropriate, this does not mean that an assessment of the impact of noise falling within the scope of BS4142 (such as plant and deliveries) should be ignored.

3.0 Policy and guidance

- 3.1 Relevant policy from the NPPF is quoted, although the paragraphs referred to are incorrectly numbered.
- 3.2 Reference to mineral extraction in paragraph 3.3 in the report is irrelevant and out of place; there are to be no mineral extraction activities taking place in this case, so far as SAL are aware.
- 3.3 No reference is made to guidance in relation to the assessment of noise and vibration from construction (such as that in British Standard BS5228, Parts 1 and 2).
- 3.4 British Standard BS4142 is referred to, but this relates only to impacts on dwellings. Further guidance will need to be considered in order to assess the noise impact from operational noise on other noise sensitive receptors, such as Mary Ward House.

4.0 Assessment of plant noise

- 4.1 Setting aside the key point, which is that the noise potentially affecting Mary Ward House has not been assessed, the noise which has been assessed has been done so in an unreliable manner due to the locations used to assess background noise levels, in SAL opinion.
- 4.2 From the description given in the Hoare Lea report, it appears that the noise survey locations were both at rooftop height. Noise measured at this height will be higher than that measured at ground or first floor receptors, as it is far less screened by buildings. SAL therefore do not consider that the results of these surveys provide a reliable baseline against which to assess noise impact, even on noise sensitive receptors that have been identified, such as the receiver shown in Figure 1 of the Hoare Lea report in Burton St.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 In SAL opinion, further noise and vibration work is essential to establish:
 - the potential effects of noise and vibration on Mary Ward House and its users (and other nearby locations) during the demolition and construction phase.
 - The potential effects of noise from proposed activities at Tavis House (such as servicing and use of the terrace) on Mary Ward House (and other nearby locations).
- 5.2 An assessment also needs to be made of the potential impact of plant noise at Mary Ward House using design criteria relevant to the uses which take place there, taking account of the particular sensitivity of, and constraints present due to, the building given its heritage status.
- 5.3 When assessing the impact of noise at Mary Ward House (and at other locations), baseline noise levels must be representative of the receptor location and not based on measurements made on the roof of Travis House, in SAL opinion.